Meeting on updates and planning the next phase of research around IPs

Date: 6 March, 2012

Venue: Alan’s office (with Eva and Josie joining on skype)

Alan Duncan, Katherine Snyder, Eva Ludi, Josephine Tucker and Alemayehu Belay met this afternoon to discuss on updates and planning the next phase on research around IPs. The issues discussed are as follows;

1. **Participatory Video work in Fogera**

Alan updated the PV work that has been conducted in Fogera; there were 12 farmers from 3 Kebeles involved in the training exercise and actual filming of the footages. Some of the issues that came out of the film include; unrestricted grazing, soil erosion, and irrigation. After editing the film was screened in Fogera to the 12 farmers who made the footage; and later in Addis for selected people within NBDC on 24th of February. Beth and Abera are back to Fogera this week to screen the film to the wider community in each Keblele. During the screening, discussions led to what the next steps are with the PV exercise and how it can be connected to the rest of the project activities. It was noted that PV is an intensive learning exercise but still there could be screening and feeding back at different scale. For instance, based on the final approval of the community (since they own the film), it will be screened to the IP members during the meeting to be held next week and to the national platform members at a later stage.

During the discussion there was a question on how the 3 issues were selected. Selection was through participatory resource mapping and PRA sort of exercises. Eva shared her experience on an alternative tool called **photo story**, which has been used in a Small scale irrigation project in Tigray where by a mixed group of farmers within the irrigation scheme was asked what problems they are facing in the scheme. They were given cameras to take photos which came up with lots of issues. This **still photos coupled with commentaries** could be an alternative to PV. This may help to avoid the drawbacks of PV in relation to the intensity of effort needed to train, shoot, edit etc.

1. **Innovation Platforms**

Alemayehu updated the IP work. The IP activities have been delayed a bit for various reasons. First, to finish the community engagement exercise in each site so that farmers’ views are reflected in the discussions of the IP meetings as well as decisions made by the IP members are in line with local realities. Second, the national work on soil conservation (terracing) which was rolled out all over the country including the NBDC sites took most of the woreda people, who are also IP members, out to the field, so we had to wait till it is finished. Next meetings of IPs will be held in Fogera on the 15th and Diga on the 21st. The one in Jeldu is to be negotiated with the stakeholders in the woreda. The M&E element of the IPs is to include video interviewing this time; we’re discussing with Peter about time of one of his staff.

There was a discussion on assigning site champions to facilitate IP events for each site (Abera, Zelalem and Alemayehu) and what their specific roles would be. Local engagement strategy for IPs is being prepared and those issues will be addressed there. Eva to sort out with RIPPLE about Zelalem’s time. Alemayehu is working on a strategy for taking IP’s forward which will include terms of reference for local facilitators. He will share this by the end of the week.

Alemayehu is also working on finding potential local facilitators for whom some of the responsibilities would be shared. So far, local NGOs like HUNDEE, Ethio-Wetlands are being approached. Devolution will start with minor activities like sending out meeting invitations and we’ll see how it progress to the final devolution of the facilitation process. There was a suggestion to consider ORDA as well.

1. **Livelihoods work**

Katherine updated the livelihoods work that looks into some of the factors that determine adoption and non-adoption of rainwater management strategies. Alemayehu and Mengistu (a consultant from AAU) were doing a 2 weeks field work in fogera to collect data on some of the topics that were identified following last year’s baseline work; soil erosion, irrigation, livestock and grazing lands, etc. Another consultant will be doing field work in Diga in 2 weeks time and the field work in Jeldu is also coming soon.

There was suggestion to closely work together (Katherine and Josie?) as there could be overlapping issues between the livelihoods research work and the political economy work from ODI especially at the local level when they deal with incentives and disincentives to adoption of rainwater management strategies.

Katherine also updated on the AFROMAISON participatory planning workshop that was held 27 Feb to 3rd of March, in which IP members from Diga and Fogera were also part of.

1. **Political economy work proposed by ODI**

The political economy work will be analyzing policy and institutional change that influences local innovation, adaptation and adoption at the higher level and assessing local incentives and barriers that encourage or constrain innovation, adaptation and adoption of RMS at local level.

Discussion focused on how to implement it; there was suggestion to engage the same partners who were involved in the baseline. However, given the amount of time and backstopping it needed to facilitate the process this option might not work so depending on the budget available it was decided to look for one local partner like FSS, EEA or OSSREA; or the individual consultants who are already involved in the livelihoods research. Discussions were also on whether to apply it on 2 sites; 1 Oromiya and 1 Amhara.

1. **The CPWF local challenge fund**

The agreement has been signed and Josie is asking for extension from CPWF as there was delay. Discussions revolved around when to introduce it to the IPs and how to implement it. It can be introduced during next week’s meeting and the actual proposal writing from IPs can be done on the 4th meeting. For ease of facilitation IP members will be asked to provide a 2 pager proposal on what they want to try out. The criteria for selection of proposals under the challenge fund are that interventions must be:

* Cross-sectoral
* Participatory
* Designed to address a critical constraint to landscape-level rainwater management
* Suitable for the target area
* Justified with use of evidence in terms of contribution to improving rainwater management and livelihood benefits.

Depending on the actions the IP members want to try out, timing should be given due consideration as we should not miss this rainy season this year. We should also find ways of combining the activity with the political economy work. Consideration also should be given to stage of the devolution of the facilitation process we would be by then; as ideally we’re transferring the fund to the local facilitators.